Agenda Item No.

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES MEETING

27 Feb 2024

SUBJECT: Rural Crime

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT PRODUCED BY WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE

1. The attached report outlines work undertaken by West Yorkshire Police in respect of Rural Crime.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Mayor/DMPC uses the report to scrutinise Force performance in respect of Rural Crime.

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 21-24

- 3. The Police and Crime Plan was developed after extensive public and partner consultation culminating in the creation of 'The Voice of West Yorkshire'. Face to face and online consultation and engagement ran from 1 September 2021-30 November 2021; The Voice of West Yorkshire is one of two key documents which supports the Police and Crime Plan 2021 -24. The document includes the notes of key events and can be found here: <u>police-and-crime-plan-voice-of-west-yorkshire-public-consultation.pdf (westyorks-ca.gov.uk).</u>
- 4. Rural Crime is not specifically highlighted in the Police & Crime Plan, but it sits within Safer Places and Thriving Communities (Priority 3), as part of our commitment to neighbourhood policing across West Yorkshire. Through the Plan, the Police, Mayor, and partners aim to tackle the harmful behaviour that targets the different communities of West Yorkshire, whether they are rural or urban in nature.
- 5. Rural Crime commonly effects areas on the boundary of West Yorkshire, namely: NE and East Leeds, the Holme Valley (Kirklees), areas of Calderdale, and SE Wakefield district.
- 6. Common rural crime topics include:
 - Farm machinery, plant, and vehicle theft including quad bikes, modern and vintage tractors, tools, and equipment from out-buildings.
 - Livestock offences including theft, worrying and attacks.
 - Fuel theft including heating oil, diesel, and petrol.
 - Equine crime including horse trailer and horse box theft, horse theft, tack theft, fly grazing and neglect.
 - Fly tipping including household and commercial waste, waste through organised criminality.
 - Poaching which crosses over with the wildlife priorities including hare coursing, deer poaching, fish poaching.

- 7. Rural crime is often linked to Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) who target and exploit rural communities across a range of crime types for example organised plant theft, livestock theft, burglaries targeting firearms, poaching and hare coursing.
- 8. Rural Crime issues tend to come to our attention through our Casework inbox, either from members of rural communities raising concerns about rural issues, or from rural interest groups contacting us about wildlife crime.
- 9. In the past, the Policing & Crime Team has supported joint work on hare coursing with the Country Land and Business Association, whilst we have encouraged rural/Farmwatch community groups to bid to the MSCF. As an important crime prevention strategy, we would encourage residents of rural communities to build strong links with their Neighbourhood Police Teams, to help establish Neighbourhood or Farm Watch schemes which can play a key role in deterring criminality in rural areas.

KEY INFORMATION

- 10. Mayoral/DMPC Activity to date includes:
 - The Mayor's Safer Communities Fund continues to support projects which tackle all crime, you can find out more here <u>www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/mscf</u>

PARTNERSHIP CONTRIBUTION

The Mayor/DMPC will work with partners to continue to further embed an early intervention and prevention projects to support safer communities.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Some Individuals and communities may be more vulnerable to Rural crime based on their protected characteristics and or the communities where they live/work. **ATTACHMENT**

Chief Constable's report – Rural Crime